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R 011201Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 001373

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2016

TAGS: PREL PINR PINS PGOV ML

SUBJECT: RPM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC FUNDS FOR
2007 ELECTIONS

Classified By: Political Officer Aaron Sampson for reasons
1.4 (b)

1.(U) Summary: On November 8 the Malian Government distributed nearly 2 million dollars of public financing to 46 of Mali's 104 registered political parties in advance of the 2007 presidential and legislative elections. The largest amounts were given to the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) and the Rally for Mali (RPM), receiving USD 618,000 and USD 467,000 respectively. Other major recipients include the Union for Republic and Democracy (URD) with USD 146,000 and the National Committee for Democratic Initiatives (CNID) with USD 120,000. RPM officials complained about the GOM's method of allocating campaign finance funds, but seem resigned to accept the decision. End Summary.

GOM Distributes USD 2 Million in Campaign Funds

2.(U) On November 8 the GOM announced that 46 of Mali's 104 registered political parties qualified for public campaign financing, and will get more than 1 billion CFA (roughly USD 2 million) in advance of the 2007 presidential and legislative elections. The formula to allocate funds takes into account a party's participation in previous legislative elections and the number of National Assembly and municipal council seats held. According to Sina Aliou Thera, the official in charge of public financing for political parties, a party must hold a national convention or meeting, maintain an operating headquarters and posses a bank account to qualify for public financing. "Some parties," said Thera, "change headquarters from one day to the next. Others cannot be found by our office which lacks the logistical means to locate them." Only Fifty-four parties out of the 104 applied for funding.

3.(U) ADEMA is slated to receive approximately USD 618,000 in campaign finance funds. The RPM, led by National Assembly President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, will receive USD 467,000. A post-2002 ADEMA spin-off party, the Union for the Republic and Democracy (URD), will receive USD 146,000. National Assembly Vice President Mountaga Tall's party, the National Committee for Democratic Initiatives (CNID), will receive USD 122,000.

4.(U) Funds allocations for the 2007 presidential and legislative elections were based on results from the 2002 legislative elections and 2004 municipal elections. For ADEMA and the RPM this detail is significant. ADEMA won more than 50 National Assembly seats in 2002 but now holds only 36 due to the defection of 17 deputies to the Union for Republic and Democracy (URD). The RPM currently holds 41 Assembly seats. RPM officials interpreted this year's distribution of campaign funds as yet another example of how the system was stacked against them. "It isn't right that we give money to all of the parties in Mali," said RPM secretary general Bocar

Treta. Treta suggested that only parties with actual seats in the National Assembly should be eligible for public financing.

¶5. (C) Comment: The RPM gained little traction complaining about allegedly being shortchanged, as 467,000 dollars is still a big pot of money in Mali. The RPM now seems resigned to accept the decision rather than challenge it in court. Of greater interest may be the allocation of ADEMA's funds. The party is slowly and methodically coming apart at the seams (septel) as senior members start to chart independent political futures, perhaps resulting in bitter in-fighting for control of the funds. On the other hand, the party hierarchy officially supports President Toure, and will use the money to support legislative campaigns in July...in competition with the RPM, which may have already expended its war chest on the presidential race in April.

McCulley